

West Hartford Substance Abuse Prevention Commission (SAPC)
Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2015

Attendees: Jeff Bersin, Joanna Curry-Sartori, Joe Kalache, Grace Johnson, Helen D, Yifrah, Kaminer, Cyndi Brown, Jamahl Hines, Dave Pauluk, Marc Kotler, Leo Negron, Dan Jordan, Sarah Howroyd, John Mancini

Welcome / Introductions / Approve Minutes / Early Departures / Announcements / Refreshments

Approval of November 2015 minutes. Minutes approved by voice. One member abstained as he was not present at last meeting.

Announcements:

- News articles:
 - Addiction to Prescription Painkillers Growing Among Seniors: Experts
 - Women's Drinking Habits Starting to Resemble Men's
 - Insurance Company (Anthem) Provides At-Home Drug Rehab Program in CT
- Free Narcan Training – New Milford has organized this event - sponsored by local SAPC equivalent. Is this a program we might consider holding in West Hartford? Sarah H offered that she can bring in Narcan reps & trainers to our meeting. DPH has a lot of funding for this program. Narcan can immediately reverse the effect of an overdose. Commission agreement that we would like to bring in.
 - Next Step: Sarah agreed to arrange to bring the program into a future meeting.

Budget

2015-2016 SAPC Budget through CASAC has increased this year to \$7116. The following funding has been allocated in the budget:

| <i>Organization</i> | <i>Program</i> | <i>Allocation</i> |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| The Bridge Family Services | Materials for Celebrate WH programs | \$1000 |
| The Bridge Family Services | Presentations to Seniors at Elmwood Senior Center. Programs in both Winter and Spring | \$400 |
| The Bridge Family Services | Tune into Life Funding | \$2416 |
| The Bridge Family Services | Every Family newsletter published twice annually. Funds cover postage and printing costs. | \$1000 |
| WHSAPC | Meeting refreshments and materials | \$300 |
| Lead By Example | Celebrate West Hartford booth and promotion materials | \$500 |
| Lead By Example | LBE sponsored events in both Middle and High Schools to increase awareness and positive peer-led support. Includes planning and merchandising campaign. | \$1000 |
| Safe Grad Night | \$250 each for Hall HS and Conard HS Graduation Night Parties | \$500 |

We are tax exempt. All program materials must include the CASAC logo. Joanna can supply tax exemption number and the CASAC logo. All receipts must be submitted with reimbursement request along with completed Complete Services Form provided by Joe K.

General Discussion

Discussion about stress and students:

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| Joanna | I will be offering 4 presentations this spring in the elementary and middle schools for parents about 1) managing family stressors with mindfulness and also 2) parenting to cultivate trust, respect and responsibility so your child feels safe and connected in challenging times. |
| Cyndi | Why not offer this at high schools? |
| Joanna | I would be happy to do that. |
| Marc | Adults are afraid and not sure what to do- social media, stress from jobs, how to control issues. It's amazing how many people have these issues and feel alone. |
| Helen | Also have kids who have issues with family life- parents struggle with job, not able to keep up, not enough to go around. |
| Yifrah | Stress is fine until cause a stress fracture. E.g. son doing homework until late at night. Then parents need to intervene. |
| Helen | My daughter says she has headaches in senior year of college. In general, stress comes across very strongly in physical symptoms – and then kids cope by drinking on weekend. |
| Dan | Lead By Example is looking at ways to manage and cope with stress. They are considering where it comes from that the way to cope is to self- medicate. Lead by example students are focused on stress right now. 2 weeks ago did mapping exercise to define term of stress. Categories – school, social, home, etc. The things they were looking at were school work and grades, social life and acceptance, college process and time management. |
| Cyndi | (COC had presentation for parents Dec 9 about teens and stress). Three presenters that came last night. They spoke about how there is so much pressure on kids and not ask them what their stressors are. Talk to your child, find out what is driving them, what is going on, keep asking the questions. They said you have to come to balance about how much doing they are and social media. Remember you are modeling everything. If you are on phone and drinking wine (they see that)--- think how you are responding to stress. Maybe not just parents but other people put pressure on kids. |
| Grace | Pressure from friends is so intense. |
| Marc | How parents pressure their kids is intense too - get a tutor to excel etc. |
| Grace | They override lunch in their child's schedule. |
| Marc | A kid came home with a grade of B- and thought it was the end of world. |
| Yifrah | Bottom line, those parents do not know enough about their child- You need to know- what is your child willing to do, ambition, and how to deal with it. Kids know job market is shrinking. Very competitive. Are you going to let go and let them experience how the world works? |

SAPC Meeting Plans-

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| Jeff | We want to try to coordinate our efforts. We are trying to create events to help prevent substance abuse. We have a great parent organization with CoC. We have a great student organization with LBE. How can we utilize these two groups to accomplish what we want to do here? Hopefully we can build resources with parents. Whatever support is needed---- we are here to support you. Given we all |
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| | have day jobs, we don't have time to put on events only with Commission members. So how can we best utilize CoC and LBE to accomplish our common goals. Could we have PTC or PTO representatives here? |
| Cyndi | Middle school and high parents do not attend PTC. (Parent Teacher Council) |
| Dan | Last year ICR looked at having an intern from UConn School of Social Work--- to coordinate, recruit members, etc. |
| Joanna | There are a couple of directions the Commission can go. Putting on events/activities/projects vs. acting as a coordinating body and sharing resources. But we need greater representation. Need people from different sectors here. It would be nice to see other entities of the town in attendance. |
| Jeff | We need to try to have all sectors including business, clergy, students, seniors, etc. |
| Helen | What if we reach out to entities (schools) different grad programs? |
| Jeff | What we are looking for here is a different point of view. I sent email asking for feedback. |
| Sarah | <i>(New member - was asked what drew her to the meeting)</i> I care about community and town and will be here long term. Personal mission for me. |
| Helen | Why bring all these people together for SAPC? |
| Jeff | Goal- prevention of substance abuse. Schools- research, real problem. |
| Leo | The problem is real. Parents deny it, say not that bad, feel shame. |
| Helen | What are alternatives to presentations? Instead of trying to find people who don't want to be public (come to a public presentations), what if we televise program to reach people? Get info out to people who are too ashamed to come out to address and discuss. |
| Joe | What if every other month have guest speaker at SAPC meetings? On alternate months we do a regular agenda. |
| Sarah | What is the school doing--- what are we supporting? |
| Jeff | Range of issues--- kids in treatment vs kids who not started. |
| Helen | Where do people go if they need help? |
| Sarah | In Gloucester MA - anyone can go to police and if you need help they will get you connected to resources. You can talk to the police regardless – they are not something to avoid, rather they are there to help. |
| Jeff | Our Police Chief was a board member of CASAC before he became Chief. |
| Joanna | To recap themes, we are considering aspects of what makes our meetings a success. We've discussed different factors- the need to recruit members, the time we hold meetings, the purpose of meetings, events vs. resources/networking, schedule- what draws people here? A presentation on Prescription drug abuse would be good. Also what about social hosting parties – parents host a party thinking if kids are at home they are safe? What is the pulse from parents? |
| Grace | What are the facts about substance abuse in West Hartford? |
| Dan | We are waiting for this year's high school survey to be completed. |
| Leo | Police Dept could share - facts are facts. In the last 4 years in High School incidents are definitely going up. |
| Cyndi | Parents have concerns about social media, what apps, new apps coming out constantly. With social media they don't now what do to, and they want someone to tell them that it's OK to put phones away. Social hosting parties is hot topic too. Parties with a lot of kids and relationships that grow out of this. Parents are |

worried about how to talk to my child about sex—when to have conversation. There's a lot of pressure- we are a professional, artistic community, sending our kids to good schools, have them play every sport, etc. Parents don't know the balance of talk to the teacher vs let their child go. Parents need permission for everything they are doing as a parent. They do feel comfortable calling the principal which is amazing. A lot of parents call the Bridge because they don't know where to go. Is there a way we could pilot a group of parents to share what we are seeing? What is happening that parents get very involved in their child's activities? Parents stalk Facebook and look around the community. Interesting to have principals from two high schools speak what they see from their perspective.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Curry-Sartori

December 15, 2015

